

Message Text

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USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, ITALY

SUBJECT: ITALIAN RATIFICATION OF NPT

REFS: (A) ROME 07675; (B) ROME 17604

1. SUMMARY: ON JANUARY 9 DURING HIS TWO DAY WASHINGTON
VISIT MINISTER ERIC DA RIN, COORDINATOR FOR NATO AND ARMS
CONTROL AFFAIRS IN ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY DISCUSSED

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US OFFICIALS. HE SAID LOWER HOUSE OF ITALIAN PARLIAMENT
WOULD APPROVE IAEA-EURATOM SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT IN A
MATTER OF WEEKS (UPPER HOUSE HAS DONE SO) BUT THAT GOI
HAD ALTERED EARLIER POSITION AND DECIDED TO BEGIN RATIFI-

CATION PROCESS FOR TREATY ITSELF EVEN BEFORE ACTION ON SAFEGUARDS WAS COMPLETED. HE WAS CONFIDENT RATIFICATION COULD BE COMPLETED BY SPRING BUT AVOIDED FIRM PREDICTION OF ACTION BEFORE REVIEW CONFERENCE. HE TOLD DR. IKLE THAT ITALIAN RATIFICATION WOULD BE ACCCOMPANIED BY STATEMENT OF RESERVATIONS, INCLUDING ONE RELATING TO RIGHT TO PNES, BUT ON A LATER OCCASION IMPLIED THIS WAS NOT FIRMLY ESTABLISHED POLICY. END SUMMARY

2. DR. IKLE RAISED THE POSSIBILITY THAT PROLIFERATION ISSUE COULD BECOME OF GREAT CONCERN TO CONGRESS THIS YEAR. HE SAID IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE ITALIANS WOULD SUBMIT THE NPT TOPAR TAMPNT AFTER RATIFICATION OF THE SAFEGUARDS

AGREEMENT HAD BEEN COMPLETED. HE ASKED FOR DA RIN'S ASSESSMENT OF HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE TO COMPLETE THE ENTIRE PROCESS.

3. DA RIN STATED THAT THE ITALIANS HAD BEEN FREQUENTLY ASKED ABOUT THIS BY THE FRG AND UK AND WERE COMPLETELY AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF NPT RATIFICATION. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT HAD ALREADY PASSED THE LOWER HOUSE AND HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN THE SENATE. RATIFICATION OF THIS COULD BE EXPECTED IN A MATTER OF WEEKS. PREVIOUSLY, THE GOI HAD PLANNED TO SUBMIT THE NPT FOR RATIFICATION IMMEDIATELY AFTER ACTION ON THE SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT WAS FINISHED. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF THE OVERWHELMING PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY FOR RATIFICATION AND THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT'S FEELING THAT RATIFICATION WAS A POLITICAL, MORAL, AND PRACTICAL IMPERATIVE, THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD NOW DECIDED TO SPEED UP THE RATIFICATION PROCESS, STARTING IT EVEN BEFORE THE COMPLETION OF ACTION ON THE SAFEGUARDS TREATY. HE HAD EVERY CONFIDENCE THAT RATIFICATION COULD BE COMPLETED IN THE SPRING, ALTHOUGH IN VIEW OF ITALY'S POLITICAL UNPREDICTABILITY, A GOVERNMENT CRISIS WHICH COULD DELAY THE SCHEDULE SLIGHTLY COULD NOT BE EXCLUDED. IN ANY

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EVENT, THE ALLIES SHOULD HAVE NO CONCERNSSABOUT ITALIAN DETERMINATION TO RATIFY.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, DA RIN CONTINUED, THERE ARE SOME UNSATISFACTORY ASPECTS TO BE CONSIDERED. THE TREATY HAD NOT BEEN THE BRILLIANT SUCCESS THAT HAD BEEN HOPED. ANOTHER FACTOR WAS THAT ITALY WAS SURROUNDED BY OTHER MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES WHO HAD NO INTENTION TO RATIFY. IT WAS DOUBTFUL THAT THEY WOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DO SO BY ITALY'S EXAMPLE. DA RIN SAID THAT DURING THE RATIFICATION PROCESS THE ITALIANS WOULD RENEW THE THREE CATEGORIES OF RESERVATIONS THEY HAVE HAD REGARDING SECURITY, THE "EUROPEAN CLAUSE," AND PEACEFUL USES.

REGARDING THE LATTER POINT, WHILE THE ITALIANS AGREED THAT AT THE PRESENT JUNCTURE NO DISTINCTION COULD BE MADE BETWEEN PNE'S AND WEAPONS TESTS, TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS MAY CHANGE THIS SITUATION. AS SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD TOLD THE NAC, IT WAS JUST AT THE RUDIMENTARY LEVEL THAT PNE'S AND WEAPONS TESTS COULD NOT BE DISTINGUISHED. THE DOOR SHOULD BE KEPT OPEN FOR POSSIBLE TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES.

5. DR. IKLE RECALLED THE INTERNATIONAL SHARING PROVISION OF ARTICLE 5 OF THE NPT. HE POINTED OUT THAT THIS WOULD

BE ECONOMICALLY BENEFICIAL SINCE R & D COSTS WOULD BE BORNE BY THE TESTING COUNTRIES. IN ANY EVENT, US INTEREST IN EXPLOSIONS FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES WAS DECREASING; FOR EXAMPLE, THE U.S. CARRIED OUT NO TESTS LAST YEAR. PERHAPS DECADES IN THE FUTURE THE SITUATION WOULD BE DIFFERENT. SPEAKING ON A PERSONAL BASIS, DA RIN SPECULATED THAT NON-NUCLEAR STATES DEPENDING ON ARTICLE 5 WOULD BE IN A TRIBUTARY POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE NUCLEAR POWERS. HE SAID THAT EVEN THOUGH THE UK WAS TRYING TO CONVINCE THE GOI OTHERWISE, WHY SHOULD ITALY NOT KEEP OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF CONSTRUCTING A PEACEFUL DEVICE IF THIS WERE TO PROVE POSSIBLE IN THE FUTURE. IT WOULD ALSO BE A BOON TO MAJOR ITALIAN AID PROJECTS SUCH AS EXCAVATIONS AND DAM CONSTRUCTION IN THE THIRD WORLD.

6. DR. IKLE POINTED OUT THAT UNDER ARTICLE 5 IT WOULD BE
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ESSENTIAL FOR INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS TO BE DRAWN UP IN SUCH A WAY AS TO INSURE FAIRNESS AMONG COMPETITORS FOR THIRD WORLD PROJECTS. DA RIN SAID HE WAS MERELY POINTING OUT THAT THIS WAS A FACTOR IN ITALIAN THINKING AND SHOULD NOT BE EXCLUDED AS A POSSIBILITY IN THE FUTURE. HE STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT WHAT HE HAD SAID WOULD NOT INFLUENCE ITALIAN DETERMINATION TO RATIFY THE NPT. DR. IKLE SAID WE HAD NO PROBLEM WITH THE FIRST TWO ITALIAN RESERVATIONS BUT, WITH REGARD TO PNE'S, WE WISHED TO IMPLEMENT ARTICLE 5 WITH FAIR INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS. HE SAID WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO DISCUSS ITALIAN CONCERN WITH THEM. DA RIN RECALLED A UK SUGGESTION TO ESTABLISH AN INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION CHARGED WITH EXPLORING ALL PNE ASPECTS HE SAID THIS WAS AN INGENIOUS SUGGESTION AND THE ITALIANS WERE OPEN TO IT BUT THE MAIN PROBLEM IN THE FUTURE WOULD BE WHETHER GOODWILL AND ASSURANCES SUFFICIED IN WHAT WOULD SURELY BECOME HEATED INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION FOR PROJECTS. DR. IKLE RESPONDED THAT NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES WERE BUT A SMALL PART OF POTENTIAL PROJECTS FOR PNES. IT WAS IN THE FIELDS OF ENGINEERING AND GENERAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT WHERE THE MAJOR EFFORT WOULD BE. THERE, NONDISCRIMINATION COULD BE ASSURED. DA RIN AGREED

TO DR. IKLE'S SUGGESTION THAT THERE BE FURTHER BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS ON THIS POINT. DA RIN EXPRESSED HIS THANKS FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE ITALIAN POSITION.

7. DR. IKLE NOTED THAT TIMELY ITALIAN RATIFICATION OF THE NPT WOULD ENABLE THE GOI TO PARTICIPATE IN THE REVIEW CONFERENCE. DA RIN SAID THE ITALIANS WOULD NOT FEEL THAT THEY WOULD BE LEGALLY PRECLUDED FROM PARTICIPATION IN THE CONFERENCE IF FOR SOME UNFORESEEN REASON RATIFICATION WERE

DELAYED PAST THE CONFERENCE DATE. DR. IKLE SAID THIS COULD BE DISCUSSED, BUT THE IMPORTANT THING WAS TO LAY A SOUND LEGAL BASIS FOR NUCLEAR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ITALY. IN THE COURSE OF THIS YEAR, AS NON-PROLIFERATION BECAME A SERIOUS ISSUE, HE COULD FORESEE THAT CONGRESS WOULD ASSERT ITSELF AND OUR RELATIONS IN THE NUCLEAR COOPERATION AND CREDITS AREA RUN THE RISK OF DETERIORATING.

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8. DA RIN SAID HE WISHED TO MAKE TWO POINTS. IN THE FIRST PLACE, HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THE SOURCE OF OUR ANXIETY. THE ITALIANS HAD ALREADY AGREED TO STRINGENT CONTROLS AND THEREFORE IT WAS NOT DIFFICULT TO DEMONSTRATE THAT ITALY WAS IN THE COMMUNITY OF LAW-ABIDING COUNTRIES. SECONDLY, THE ITALIANS WERE HAVING THEIR FEET PUT TO THE FIRE ON THE ISSUE BY EVERYONE. WHY WAS IT THEN THAT NEITHER U.S. NOR THE SOVIET UNION HAD CRIED OUT AFTER THE INDIAN EXPLOSION? ITALIANS, ON THE OTHER HAND, WERE AN ALLY AND HAD GIVEN FULL MORAL AND POLITICAL GUARANTEES.

9. DR. IKLE REPLIED THAT IT WAS OUR VIEW THE PUBLIC CRITICISM OF INDIA COULD BE COUNTER PRODUCTIVE. FURTHERMORE, IT WAS ALREADY EVIDENT AND WOULD BECOME MORE SO IN THE YEARS TO COME THAT INDIA WOULD BE SUFFERING REPERCUSSIONS FOR ITS ACTIONS. FOR INSTANCE, IT WOULD BE HARD TO GET CREDITS FROM CONGRESS AND THE EXCHANGE OF SCIENTISTS WOULD BE AFFECTED. DR. IKLE SAID THAT WE FIELD AND WANTED TO FURTHER THIS IN A COOPERATIVE EFFORT. THERE WAS THE ADDITIONAL POINT THAT LAWYERS WONDERED WHETHER THE EURATOM-IAEA SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT COULD COME INTO FORCE UNTIL ALL SIGNATORIES TO THAT AGREEMENT RATIFIED THE NPT. TREATY MEMBERSHIP WOULD GIVE OUR COOPERATION A MORE SOLID BASIS. DA RIN EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION FOR OUR WILLINGNESS TO LISTEN TO ITALIAN CONCERN AND TO HOLD FURTHER BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS.

10. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WITH US OFFICIALS, DA RIN REPEATED MOST OF HIS EARLIER ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING ITALIAN RESERVATION ON PNEs. US OFFICIALS EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF A PNE RESERVATION

AND POINTED OUT THAT THE NPT SPECIFICALLY PRECLUDED DEVELOPMENT OF ANY NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE DEVICE BY NNWS. IN RESPONSE TO DA RIN'S ARGUMENT THAT IN THE CASE OF ADVANCED NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE PROGRAMS, A DISTINCTION BETWEEN

PNES AND WEAPONS MIGHT BE POSSIBLE. US OFFICIALS SAID THAT EVEN IF THIS WERE TO PROVE TO BE THE CASE, IT WOULD NOT APPLY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE CAPABILITY BY A NNWS SINCE THERE WAS NO WAY TO DEVELOP SUCH A CAPABILITY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES WITHOUT IN THE

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PROCESS ACQUIRING A DEVICE WHICH COULD BE USED AS A NUCLEAR WEAPON.

11. WITH REGARD TO THE POSSIBILITY OF COMMERCIAL DISCRIMINATION AGAINST NNWS IN PROVIDING PNE SERVICES, US OFFICIALS POINTED OUT THAT THE NPT CONTAINED PROVISIONS DESIGNED TO PREVENT NWS FROM EXPLOITING PNES IN A MANNER THAT DISCRIMINATED AGAINST NNWS PARTIES TO THE TREATY. THEY ADDED THAT PNE ASSISTANCE FROM NWS COULD SAVE NNWS THE ENORMOUS COSTS OF THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM NEEDED TO ATTAIN SUCH A CAPABILITY, AND THAT NNWS COMPETITION IN THE NON-EXPLOSIVE ASPECTS OF PNE PROJECTS -- SUCH AS ENGINEERING SERVICES AND DRILLING, WHICH MADE UP A VERY LARGE PORTION OF THE COST OF PNE PROJECTS -- WOULD NOT BE PREJUDICED BY THE TREATY. US OFFICIALS CITED THE LACK OF CURRENT DOMESTIC US INTEREST IN PNES. THE ITALIANS NOTED THAT THE BRITISH SEEMED TO BE NEGATIVE AT THIS TIME ON THE PROSPECTS FOR USEFUL PNES, BUT WHO COULD PREDICT THE FUTURE? DA RIN SAID THAT HE WAS MERELY REFLECTING CURRENT ITALIAN THOUGHTS ON THE PNE RESERVATION -- IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE POINT WOULD NOT BE PURSUED BY THE GOI - HE INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO HAVE FURTHER EXCHANGES OF VIEWS ON THE SUBJECT.

12. WITH REGARD TO ITALIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE REVIEW CONFERENCE, DA RIN REPEATED THE CONTENTION THAT ITALY SHOULD BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE EVEN IF RATIFICATION WAS NOT COMPLETED. US OFFICIALS POINTED OUT THAT IN VIEW OF THE TERMS OF THE NPT, FULL PARTICIPATION WOULD NOT SEEM FEASIBLE WITHOUT RATIFICATION.

13. GENERAL BUTTELLI, OF THE ITALIAN GENERAL STAFF, WHO ACCOMPANIED DA RIN, ASSURED US OFFICIALS THAT ITALIAN MILITARY LEADERS WERE NOT REPEAT NOT AGAINST THE NPT. KISSINGER

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